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RUEHRY/AMEMBASSY CONAKRY PRIORITY  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY  
RUEHFN/AMEMBASSY FREETOWN PRIORITY  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY  
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RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 001727

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INL/FO, WHA/FO, INL/PC, INL/LP, INL/AAE, WHA/AND,  
EUR/ERA, L/LEI;  
VIENNA FOR UNVIE;  
LA PAZ FOR DCM, NAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2018  
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [KDEM](#) [EUN](#) [BL](#)  
SUBJECT: EUROPEAN COMMISSION SHARES U.S. CONCERNS OVER  
THREATENED EXPULSION OF DEA FROM BOLIVIA

REF: A. STATE 118934 (NOTAL)  
[1](#)B. LA PAZ 2355 (NOTAL)

Classified By: INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT  
AFFAIRS (INL) COUNSELOR JAMES P. MCANULTY FOR REASONS  
1.4 (B) AND (D)

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SUMMARY  
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[1](#)1. (C) European Commission officials agreed with U.S.  
concerns over the threatened expulsion of Drug Enforcement  
Administration (DEA) personnel from Bolivia. They expressed  
hope that the decision was still open to change, given the  
void that such a situation would present in law enforcement  
efforts against drug trafficking organizations in Bolivia.  
END SUMMARY.

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DEMARCHE DELIVERED  
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[1](#)2. (C) Mission INL Counselor and DEA Assistant Regional  
Director met with European Commission officials November 12  
to deliver the demarche requested in Ref A. Interlocutors  
from the Commission's External Relations Directorate included  
Andean Community Head of Unit Rafael Gelabert, Coordination  
and Analysis Head of Unit Andrew Standley, Desk Officer for  
Bolivia Nicola Murray of the Andean Community Unit, and  
Coordinator for International Cooperation on Drug Issues Ann

Vanhout. Per instructions in Ref A, INL Counselor communicated the talking points verbally but did not leave any written copy. Commission interlocutors followed the points closely, with Desk Officer Murray taking copious notes, particularly on the projected impact on production levels. Gelabert noted that he had heard, in the wake of President Evo Morales' declaration on the expulsion of DEA personnel, that other Bolivian Government (GOB) officials had indicated that the threatened expulsion could be averted if "technicalities" (i.e., agreement on written ground rules for DEA activities) could be worked out within 90 days. He asked what the purpose of the expulsion would be, whether the decision was "irreversible," and whether the U.S. Government maintained contacts with the GOB on counter-drug issues.

13. (C) INL Counselor noted that he had heard about the reported request for a written agreement. He noted that, to his knowledge, most Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) activities continued in Bolivia, at least for the time being.

He expressed concern, however, that expulsion of DEA personnel would harm overall counter-drug efforts in Bolivia.

DEA ARD noted that DEA activities in Santa Cruz and the Chapare region had ceased. He explained DEA's role in sharing drug-related intelligence with GOB counterparts, both regarding drug organizations operating in Bolivia and specific criminal cases under investigation. INL Counselor expressed hope that Commission colleagues could speak with GOB counterparts to convince them to reverse this counter-productive decision, reiterating that drug production

BRUSSELS 00001727 002 OF 003

in Bolivia ultimately harmed Bolivian society and could produce higher flows of cocaine into Europe.

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KEEN COMMISSION INTEREST IN CONTINUITY OF U.S. PROGRAMS  
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14. (C) Standley, who had served recently as the Commission Delegation Chief in La Paz, inquired about reactions from Brazil and other countries. He expressed concern that greater production in Bolivia could produce harmful consequences in neighboring Brazil (presumably as both a consumer and transit country to Europe). Gelabert inquired whether the U.S. would suspend other anti-drug assistance to Bolivia as a result. INL Counselor noted that NAS operations continued in Bolivia, but the absence of DEA would undercut overall efforts. He explained that the U.S. decision to certify Bolivia as "failing demonstrably" in fighting drugs also provided for a waiver to permit anti-drug assistance to continue. Gelabert inquired about the impact on trade preferences. INL Counselor promised to obtain a definitive response, noting his understanding that the waiver covered direct anti-drug assistance but not necessarily other assistance or trade preferences less directly related to drug-fighting efforts. Gelabert also inquired about the specific types of programs NAS was implementing in Bolivia.

15. (C) INL Counselor promised to obtain more specifics, but noted that the program in Bolivia, as in other Andean countries, had focused considerable resources on eradication of illicit coca leaf to prevent their transformation into cocaine and other illegal drug products. He noted that, in recent years, the GOB had demonstrated some successes in interdicting cocaine, but some of these achievements may have resulted from greater production and availability rather than solely from greater efficiency in interdicting drugs. Standley noted his understanding that the GOB had marginalized some of its coca "idealogues," but still faced tremendous pressures from the "cocaleros" and others pressing for greater licit production and uses. Vanhout noted "strong" views expressed by GOB representatives (presumably in favor of removing coca leaf from the UN Convention's listing of illicit substances) at recent UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) meetings on drug issues. INL Counselor promised to provide a "heads up" on these queries

to INL Assistant Secretary David Johnson and the rest of the U.S. Delegation who will participate in the November 14 U.S.-EU Troika meeting on Drug Issues in Brussels. Standley and Murray indicated that they will attend portions of the meeting dealing with Andean issues, while Vanhout would attend the full meeting.

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COMMISSION WILL TRY TO HELP  
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¶6. (C) In closing, Gelabert said the Commission shared U.S. concerns over the decision to expel DEA personnel from Bolivia. He indicated that the Commission "will try to help, if we can." After the meeting, Bolivia Desk Officer

BRUSSELS 00001727 003 OF 003

reinforced the concerns expressed by Gelabert. She openly wondered whether any other entity or country could fill the void that would be created by DEA's expulsion from the country, if the decision is not reversed.

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COMMENT  
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¶7. (C) Mission hopes that the European Commission will attempt to use their "good offices" to convince GOB counterparts to reverse this counter-productive and mistaken decision to expel DEA personnel from Bolivia. The upcoming U.S.-EU Troika Meeting on Drug Issues will present another opportunity to continue the dialogue on the drug situation and future counter-drug activities in Bolivia. END COMMENT.

SILVERBERG

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